

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended) An ink composition comprising a colorant comprising a dye or a pigment and a polymer encapsulating the dye or pigment and having, in its molecular chain, sites possessing ultraviolet absorbing activity and photostabilizing activity; water; and a water-soluble organic solvent, wherein the polymer encapsulated colorant is in the form of a fine particle in the ink composition and the polymer has a glass transition point of 30°C or below and comprises a carboxyl or sulfonic acid group, and wherein the polymer encapsulated colorant is produced by ~~polymerizing monomers for constituting the polymer in the presence of the dye or pigment~~ a process consisting essentially of dissolving or dispersing the dye or pigment in the monomers for constituting the polymer to form a solution or dispersion and subjecting the solution or dispersion to emulsion polymerization in water in the presence of a polymerization catalyst and an emulsifier.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein either the weight average molecular weight or the number average molecular weight of the polymer is 1,000 to 50,000.

Claim 4 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer has hydrophilic and hydrophobic groups.

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (original) The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the hydrophobic group is at least one member selected from the group consisting of alkyl, substituted alkyl, aromatic monocyclic hydrocarbon, fused polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, heteromonocyclic, and fused heterocyclic groups.

Claim 7 (original) The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the polymer is a random copolymer, a block copolymer, or a graft copolymer.

Claim 8 (currently amended) The ink composition according claim 1 2, which further comprises polymeric fine particles having a diameter of 5 to 200 nm.

Claim 9 (original) The ink composition according not claim 8, wherein the polymeric fine particles are dispersed particles of a polymer emulsion having a minimum film-forming temperature of 30°C or below.

Claims 10 - 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer comprises a thermoplastic polymer.

Claim 18 (original) The ink composition according to claim 17, wherein the thermoplastic polymer is selected from the group consisting of an ethylene/vinyl

acetate copolymer, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate copolymer, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, a poly(meth) acrylic ester, a styrene/(meth) acrylic ester copolymer, a styrene/maleic acid copolymer, a styrene/itaconic ester copolymer, polyvinyl acetate, polyester, polyurethane, and polyamide.

Claim 19 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein a site possessing the ultraviolet-absorbing activity and/or the photostabilizing activity is selected from the group consisting of aromatic monocyclic hydrocarbon, fused polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, heteromonocyclic, and fused heterocyclic groups, and has absorbing activity in a wavelength region from 200 to 400 nm.

Claim 20 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein a site possessing the ultraviolet absorbing activity or the photostabilizing activity has a benzotriazole, benzophenone, salicylate, cyanoacrylate, hindered phenol, or hindered amine skeleton.

Claim 21 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is a polymer or a copolymer using, as a monomer, a benzotriazole ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a benzophenone ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a salicylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a cyanoacrylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a hindered phenol ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, or a hindered amine photostabilizer having an ethylenically unsaturated bond.

Claim 22 (cancelled)

Claim 23 (previously presented) A recording method comprising the step of depositing an ink composition onto a recording medium to perform printing, the ink composition being one according to claim 1.

Claim 24 (previously presented) An ink jet recording method comprising the steps of: ejecting a droplet of an ink composition; and depositing the droplet onto a recording medium to perform printing, the ink composition being one according to claim 1.

Claim 25 (previously presented) A record printed by the recording method according to claim 23.

Claims 26 to 36 (cancelled)

Claim 37 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein water is present in the ink composition in an amount that is greater than an amount of the colorant, the polymer and the water-soluble organic solvent together.

Claim 38 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the polymer comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of phosphoric acid, amido, and amino groups.

Claim 39 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein

the water-soluble organic solvent has a boiling point of 180°C or above.

Claim 40 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the colorant has a particle diameter of 5 to 500 nm.

Claim 41 (previously presented) The ink composition according to claim 1, which further comprises another colorant.

Claims 42 to 44 (cancelled)

Claim 45 (currently amended) An ink composition comprising a colorant comprising a dye or a pigment and a polymer encapsulating the dye or pigment and having, in its molecular chain, sites possessing ultraviolet absorbing activity and photostabilizing activity; water; and a water-soluble organic solvent, wherein the polymer encapsulated colorant is in the form of a fine particle in the ink composition and the polymer has a glass transition point of 30°C or below and comprises a carboxyl or sulfonic acid group, and wherein the polymer encapsulated colorant is produced by polymerizing monomers for constituting the polymer in the presence of the dye or pigment ; ~~The ink composition according to claim 1,~~ wherein the polymer encapsulated colorant consists of the dye or pigment and the polymer having, in its molecular chain, sites possessing ultraviolet and photostabilizing activity.